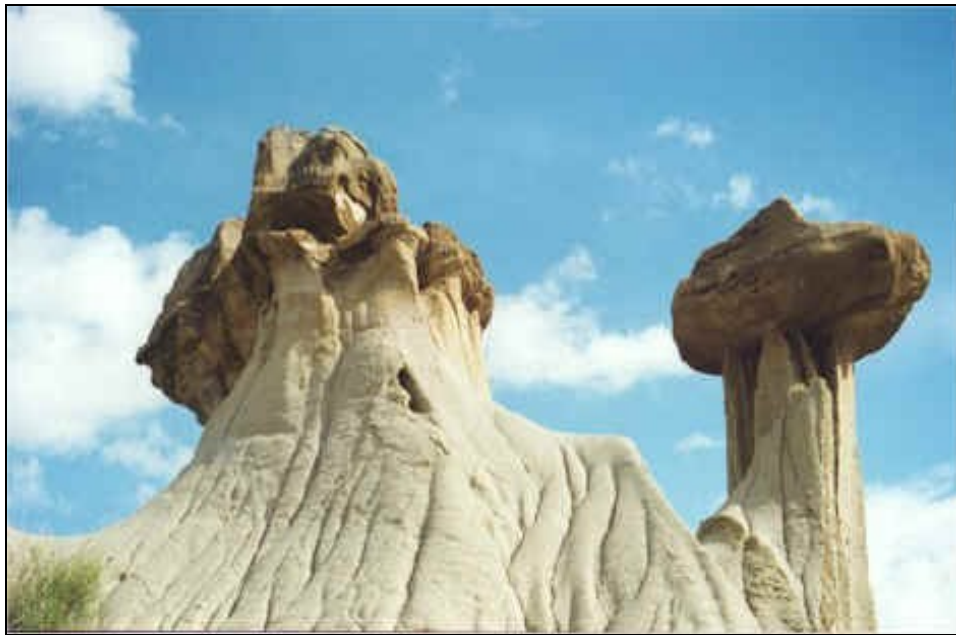


Makoshika State Park Management Plan

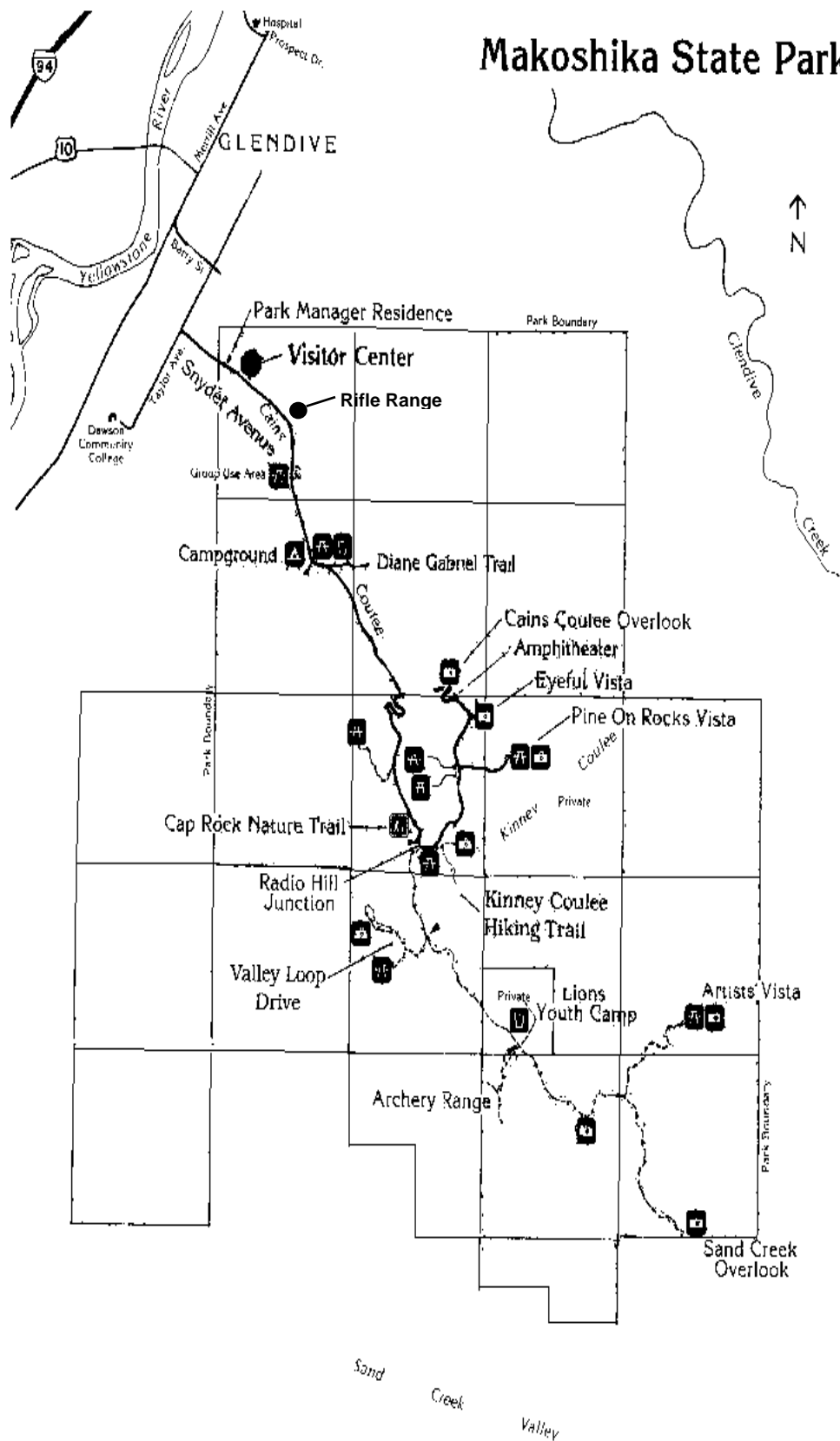
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Developed by the
Makoshika Advisory Committee and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
June 2005



Makoshika State Park



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Makoshika State Park is the largest park in the Montana State Parks System, covering over 11,500 acres of badlands in eastern Montana. The park, which is situated adjacent to Glendive, Montana, was added to the Montana State Park system in 1953.

To the Lakota-Sioux Indians, Ma-ko-shi-ka meant bad earth or bad land. Today, the park's pine and juniper studded badland formations house the fossil remains of such dinosaurs as Tyrannosaurus Rex and Triceratops. The park offers diverse amenities for visitors, including roads and hiking trails for park exploration, scenic vistas, campgrounds, a golf course, an amphitheater, a rifle range and an archery range. A visitor center at the park entrance exhibits the site's geologic, fossil, and prehistoric stories.

The last plan written for Makoshika State Park was completed in 1984. The 2005 Makoshika State Park Management Plan updates previous planning efforts to reflect current issues and opportunities at the park. The plan offers a comprehensive vision and action plan for the park for the next 10 years by identifying issues important to the success of the park and providing actions for addressing them. These actions are scheduled to be implemented during the life of this plan, but are subject to funding and personnel availability. The implementation timeline is included at the end of this document.

In January 2004, a citizen advisory group was formed to analyze issues and develop management recommendations for the park. This work included public participation through a 2003 summer visitor survey at the park, monthly advisory group sessions from January to May 2004, and another in May 2005 to review the draft. A thirty-day public comment period and open house will be held at the park to discuss the plan and hear comments. Upon revisions based on public comment, the final plan would be submitted to the FWP Region 7 Supervisor, Parks Division Administrator, then to the FWP Director for approval. The regional park staff and advisory committee will review the management plan in 2010 to gauge implementation progress and make necessary revisions.

Plan Summary

The advisory committee formulated the following issues and objectives. Goals and recommended actions to achieve the objectives are located in the text of this plan along with a schedule for completion of each action and further discussions of the issues.

Community Relations

Makoshika State Park is a valuable asset to the Glendive community. Local use of the park needs to be stimulated through better partnerships between the park and surrounding organizations and governments. These partnerships include physical connections between the city and park for educational and recreational opportunities. Also park neighbors need to be partnered with to address visitor and livestock trespass issues, including liability, damage, and visitor safety.

Management Objectives:

- Coordinate with the City of Glendive, Chamber of Commerce, Dawson Community College (DCC), Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF), and the public to establish non-motorized trails connecting the park, the river, and the city. The trails will extend at least five miles into the park.
- Investigate the possibility of an equestrian trail in the park and/or extending outside of the park.
- Investigate the possibility of a mountain bike trail in the park.
- Collaborate with schools for greater educational opportunities at the park.
- Work with organizations involved with the park to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park.
- Encourage use of park facilities by outside organizations.
- Investigate and record neighbor concerns and comments.
- Establish boundary markings around the park property to avoid visitor trespassing onto private property.
- Manage livestock.
- Work with wildlife biologist and warden to have special weapons restricted hunts as needed to control wildlife populations.

Visitor Services

In order to increase visitation, the park needs to be strategically promoted. Along with efforts to increase visitation, there needs to be a balance between park experience and resource preservation. While park facilities are generally serving visitors adequately, some improvements are needed to provide amenities necessary for visitor comfort and to increase the length of time visitors stay at the park.

Management Objectives:

- Provide clear directions to the park from all feeder routes.
- Develop a marketing plan for the park.
- Provide more trails, including some longer, non-motorized trails.
- Continue to allow off highway vehicles (OHV) and snowmobile use on roads.
- Stabilize existing rifle range to provide safe user facilities.
- Continue to pursue finding a suitable rifle range location outside the park.
- Continue leasing archery range to local club for management.
- Improve facilities in the lower campground.
- Provide water in the park interior.
- Install new latrines.

Infrastructure

Road maintenance is a continuing issue in the park given the unique geology of the area. Maintenance needs to address weather, travel and visitor safety. There is an opportunity to develop more scenic overlooks, and pullouts for safety if proposed trail routes are to share the road. Radio towers and electric lines interfere with park beauty; the park needs a direct approach to reducing impacts to the scenic views.

Management Objectives:

- Educate visitors on park road conditions.
- Provide consistent and adequate ongoing road maintenance.
- Provide scenic overlooks where feasible with interpretive panels.
- Initiate and maintain a dialogue with radio tower owners.
- Provide incentives for radio tower removal, consolidation, and/or screening to reduce visual impacts.
- Investigate feasibility of burying electric lines through park

Interpretation and Education

Park information needs to be updated and more readily available to visitors. This consists of inclusion of new park features, and updates of park brochures and trail guides. Interpretive displays are stale and need to be upgraded and diversified to keep visitors coming back. This will include more complete utilization of the Visitor Center building. Also, artifacts need adequate security. Educational opportunities for schools, organizations, and individual visitors need to be proactively expanded. Adequate staff and resources for interpretation need to be provided for the park.

The goals listed here represent specific ideas for potential expansion of interpretive and educational programs in the park as expressed by the advisory committee and parks staff. A comprehensive interpretive plan for the visitor center would be completed in the next two years, which would consider the goals and objectives listed below.

Management Objectives:

- More completely utilize space in the Visitor Center.
- Upgrade displays to move beyond the current visual format and engage all senses.
- Provide more structured guidance through the Visitor Center displays.
- Provide a means for visitors to take interpretive messages home.
- Institute hands-on interpretation programs year round.
- Further develop *existing* interpretive trails.
- Develop *additional* interpretive sites and trails.
- Protect, record, and interpret archeological resources.
- Provide visitors and staff with accurate, comprehensive information on park wildlife and plant life.

Financial and Human Resources

Additional personnel and financial resources may be needed to increase services as outlined in this management plan, including guided tours, educational programming, and enforcement. Resources are also needed to provide security in the park, especially in the Visitor Center and for maintenance of existing facilities. Educational methods, including a uniformed presence in the park, need to be utilized to more effectively implement park rules.

Management Objectives:

- Provide tour guide services outside of visitor center to include guided outings on park trails.
- Work with organizations involved with the park to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park.
- Institute hands-on interpretive programs year round.
- Determine and locate personnel needed to conduct programs as outlined and resources to support them.
- Increase security at the Visitor Center.
- Balance education about park rules with enforcement.
- Communicate the success of the new fee system and the importance of continuing to support the system.
- Analyze and respond to changes in park visitation that result from the fee structure change.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Through implementation of this plan, the park's natural and cultural resources need to be protected, as well as managed for the benefit of park visitors, neighbors, and other stakeholders. This management includes stewardship of the land, including, but not limited to, acquisition of inholdings, future development throughout the park, including Recreation and Public Purposes Act parcels acquired from the Bureau of Land Management, and attention to fire danger effects on park resources and neighbors. Recreational activities that affect the resources need to be addressed, such as fossil and artifact hunting. Botanical, paleontological, and geological studies should be pursued to increase knowledge about the park and identify potential management considerations.

Management Objectives:

- Control park damage and litter resulting from the neighboring Dawson County dump site.
- Manage non-native plant species to maintain health of native species.
- Reduce and prepare for fire danger.
- Guard against fossil and artifact theft.
- Protect artifacts and fossils when they are unearthed; ensure agency ownership..
- Educate visitors about Makoshika resources.
- Improve visitor safety at McCarty Cabin.
- Research historical use of the park lands.
- Incorporate Pine on Rocks area into the park through ownership rather than the current recreation easement.
- Discuss with owners potential for purchasing Lions Camp inholding.
- Acquire mineral rights to private and BLM mineral inholdings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Montana State Parks would like to thank the Makoshika State Park Advisory Committee for their contributions of both time and energy throughout the park planning process. Without the committee member's dedication to the process, as well as their expertise and vision, the plan would not have been possible.

Makoshika Advisory Committee Members:

Jim Lee – Friends of Makoshika

Christie Bury – Glendive Chamber of Commerce, replaced Linda Konkilya deceased

Jim Thompson – Makoshika Bowmen

Dennis Snow – Recreational park user, biking

Amy Myran – Friends of Makoshika, Recreational park user, hiking

Tom Temple – Glendive geology teacher

Charles Ferguson – Park neighbor

Max Martel – Glendive resident/ member of Assiniboine-Sioux

Lance Phinney – Lion's Youth Camp

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INTRODUCTION

Makoshika State Park is located in Dawson County directly southwest of Glendive, Montana and is located in Fish, Wildlife and Parks administrative Region 7. The park can be reached by driving through town off of Interstate 94. The name of the park comes from the Lakota-Sioux Indian word Ma-ko-shi-ka, meaning bad earth or bad land.

In May 2003, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) began the process of developing a comprehensive management plan for the park with a summer visitor survey. FWP then collaborated with a citizen-based advisory committee, guided by input from the general public, to identify park issues and trends and formulate management goals, objectives, policies and actions. The results of this effort are incorporated into this management plan in a format intended to guide projects and activities in Makoshika State Park for the next ten years. This plan describes a vision and work plan that conserves the park's natural and cultural resources, provides recreational opportunities for park users, and develops educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors.

ABOUT THE PARK

History

In 1939, Dawson County donated 160 acres for a park in what is now Makoshika State Park. In 1953, an additional 80 acres was donated by Dawson County to the Montana Department of Highways, State Parks Division. Over the next 50 years, the park acquired additional lands from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the County, and purchases of private land.

In August 1991, a female juvenile triceratops skull weighing 600 pounds and measuring 5 ½ feet long was unearthed near Makoshika State Park and is considered a world-class specimen. The skull was discovered in August of 1990, during the final days of a three-year field study of the Hell Creek Formation by the Milwaukee Public Museum. This specimen is currently on display in the visitor center at Makoshika State Park.

As of 1997, the largest and most complete skeleton of the dinosaur *Thescelosaurus* was found at an undisclosed site in Makoshika. Because of the scarcity of its remains, *Thescelosaurus* is a much rarer dinosaur than *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Positive identification of the find was made by Dr. Jack Horner, Curator of Paleontology at the Museum of the Rockies, Montana State University in Bozeman. *Thescelosaurus*, meaning “wonderful lizard,” belongs to the hypsilophodont family of small to medium-sized dinosaurs six to sixteen feet in length, which flourished from the Middle Jurassic to the Late Cretaceous period.

Geography and Natural Resources

Makoshika State Park encompasses an area of 11,531 acres of rugged badland terrain. Known for their unique beauty and topography, these badlands are geologically older than most badlands in this geographical region. At lower elevations, the Late Cretaceous Hell Creek formation is exposed throughout the park. Higher elevations of the park are capped by the Lower Paleocene Tullock formation (lower part of the Fort Union). The Cretaceous-Tertiary (K-T) boundary is regionally conformable and is the geologic break between the time of the dinosaurs and that of mammals. In addition to the badlands, the main attraction here is the fossil fauna of the Hell Creek formation, *dinosaurs*. The Hell Creek and its equivalent, the Lance, contain the remains of at least ten different dinosaurs, several species of fish, numerous turtles, three crocodilian species, birds, and at least six families of Upper Cretaceous mammalians.

Cultural Resources

Native Americans followed the herds of buffalo, elk, antelope and deer, which were once prevalent in eastern Montana. The park's proximity to the Yellowstone River lends itself to Native American use and the use of the buffalo jump in the park. Surficial and subsurficial prehistoric cultural remains are present in the park as demonstrated by a 1979 Montana State University survey. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition passed through the area on their way east in 1806. The McCarty ancestors homesteaded on land within the park; the framed cabin remains on the site, but is no longer used for shelter. The park holds a recreation easement on this tract.

Facilities and Infrastructure

The park entrance and visitor center are southeast of Glendive. From the entrance, visitors access the park on approximately 12 miles of roads and 2.5 miles of designated trails, though many people are attracted to the remaining undeveloped backcountry to hunt or sightsee on foot. Seven miles of the park road system are paved or graveled, while the backcountry roads are primarily unimproved and impassible when wet. The visitor center contains an information desk, interpretive displays, gift shop, restrooms, a meeting room, park offices, an outdoor picnic area, and a paleontology lab and repository.

Developed trails in the park include the ½ -mile Kinney Coulee trail, the ½ -mile Cap Rock interpretive trail, and the 1 ½ -mile Diane Gabriel loop trail.

The park manager lives on site and a seasonal host resides in the campground. The park has twenty-two campsites in the lower campground including one fully accessible site and eight tent sites, and numerous dispersed sites throughout the park; a group use area is available and can be reserved. The park offers picnicking opportunities and an amphitheater.

A rifle range was historically used and continues to be used in the park and is maintained by park staff. An archery range is also located further south in the park. A folf (frisbee-golf) course is designated near the campground.

Operations

Makoshika is open year-round to visitors. The visitor center is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The rest of the year, the visitor center is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Staffing and Organization

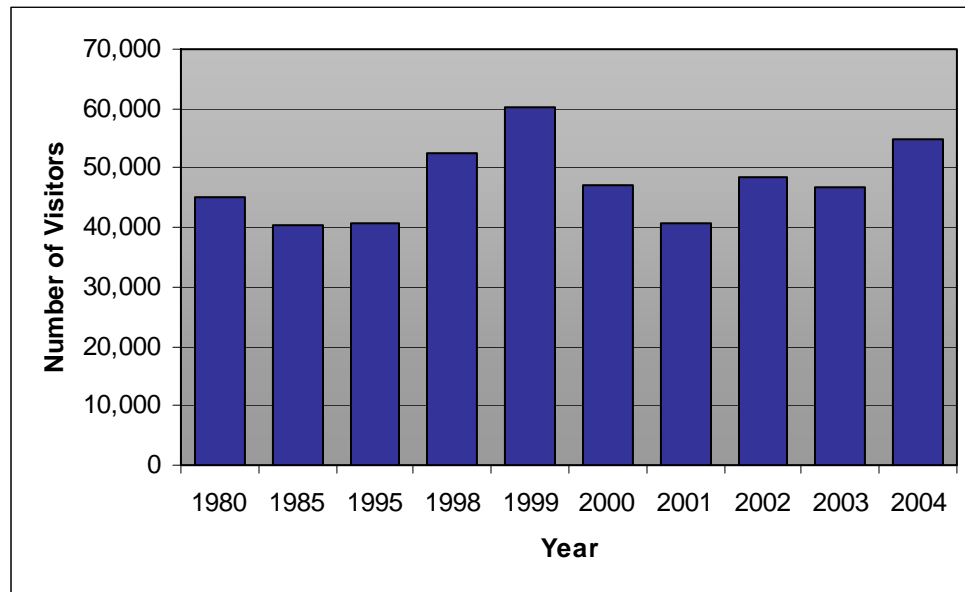
In total, Montana State Parks manages 50 state parks and approximately 320 fishing access sites. The parks system is divided into seven regions; Makoshika is located in Region Seven, which covers the southeastern portion of the state. Park staff includes: one full-time

park manager, a full time administrative assistant, 1.53 FTE in five seasonal positions, campground hosts from May to September, and an average of 3,260 volunteer hours a year. The Friends of Makoshika, a local not-for-profit group, actively supports park operations by sponsoring special events and activities.

Visitation

Makoshika visitation has increased annually since the park's inception into the Montana State Parks System. Visitation in 2004 was 54,891, the highest visitation in the last five years. With the change in residential fee structures as of January 1, 2004, visitation trends are projected to continue increasing as a result of resident visitation.

Table 1. Makoshika State Park Visitation 1980-2004



NOTE: The totals for each year are not necessarily directly comparable. Data from 1980 came from FWP traffic counter data, from Memorial Day Weekend until September 30. 1985 data was derived from MDT feeder route analysis. Data from 1995-2004 was primarily derived from year-round, on-site vehicle counts.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Makoshika State Park Management Plan offers a comprehensive vision and action plan for the park for the next 10 years; it follows the most recent management plan of 1984. The current plan will be reviewed according to FWP policy after five years. This plan offers guidance for park managers to engage area residents and visitors, and help the park realize its potential as an educational, recreational, and cultural destination.

This Makoshika Management Plan was developed according to the following goals and guidelines:

1. Develop a vision for the park;
2. Ensure stakeholders have ownership in the planning process, final plan and that their interests are addressed;
3. Develop a plan with specific attention to the founding concepts of the park:
 - Education elements: outdoor classroom,
 - Recreation elements: natural resources appreciation,
 - Commercial element: regional tourism.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for the Makoshika Management Plan began in February 2003 with meetings to define the purpose and process, conduct stakeholder analyses, and develop a public participation plan. In May 2003, the park began conducting a summer visitor survey at the park. The survey provided information to help direct and inform the planning process, including visitor demographics, activities, and opinions on park management and services. A volunteer, citizen-based committee was formed to assist in an advisory capacity in the drafting of this plan. The committee represented a diversity of park users and interests during monthly meetings from September of 2003 through May of 2004. The committee contributed their expertise while considering funding, staffing, resource needs, and community desires. The committee identified issues pertaining to the park and also developed recommendations for park management.

Utilizing information from the public process and input from these meetings, the Parks Division developed a draft management plan in April 2005, delayed due to staff changes in

the park and at the planning position. The draft was reviewed and revised by the advisory committee and Parks staff. The public will have thirty days to comment on the second draft. After considering public comments and making appropriate modifications to the draft, a final management plan will be presented to the Regional Supervisor, Parks Administrator, and then the Director of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks for review and approval in August 2005.

PLANNING TIMELINE

- **February – May 2003**

Background research, process identification, stakeholder analysis, committee member invitations.

- **May-September 2003**

Public scoping conducted to gather data and identify issues through a visitor survey and local community outreach.

- **November 18, 2003**

Advisory committee members convened for first advisory committee meeting.

- **November 2003 – May 2004**

Committee met monthly to evaluate park issues and develops recommendations.

- **May - June 2005**

First draft of management plan issued for committee review.

- **July 2005**

Second draft of plan is available for public review.

- **August 2005**

Final draft submitted to FWP director for approval.

MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK FUTURE

Makoshika State Park management is guided by a commitment to the park Management Goals identified in the 1984 management plan and the Montana State Parks Program Mission. The Parks Program Mission is defined in the 2020 Vision document, which provides a broad, long-range direction for the Montana State Park System for the first two decades of the twenty-first century. The Makoshika Management Plan reflects the mission and applicable goals and objectives of the 2020 Vision plan.

Montana State Park Mission Statement

The mission of the Montana State Park system is to preserve, enhance, and interpret a diverse representation of Montana's most outstanding natural, cultural/historic, and recreational resources, for the personal, social, and economic benefit of present and future generations.

Makoshika State Park Mission Statement

Makoshika State Park will preserve and interpret paleontological and archeological resources. Natural resources will be conserved and interpreted to enhance the native flora and fauna. Compatible recreational activities will be enhanced while maintaining opportunities for solitude inside the park. Partnerships will foster community relations, educational and marketing opportunities.

Makoshika State Park Vision

The 2004 Makoshika State Park Management Plan is designed to help the park build and grow toward the following vision over the next 10 years.

Over the next 10 years, Makoshika State Park will develop as a destination park with year-round opportunities for all ages. Marketing efforts will increase awareness of the park. Visitation and activities throughout the park will increase. Activities will include diverse, expanded educational and recreational opportunities throughout the week. Educational activities will expand to include a diversity of interpretation throughout the park. Partnerships with community organizations and governments will continue to be nurtured and improved to provide educational, recreational, and marketing opportunities.

Park facilities will be managed to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for park visitors. Improved park roads will allow for more access to park resources and opportunities to enjoy scenic views along the road system. Clear park boundary delineation will provide for better visitor management and will nurture neighbor relations. Volunteer and staffing levels will keep pace with rising visitation and activity levels at the park.

Park resources, including the geology, paleontology, aesthetic, ecological, and cultural resources, will continue to be protected and interpreted. Baseline data on all park resources will be collected and monitored to maintain resource integrity. Plans will be implemented to protect park resources from theft, resource impacts, and natural hazards such as fire and proliferation of noxious weeds. Through a fossil management plan, fossil discoveries of significance will be cataloged and preserved.

MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The planning committee and general public identified the following issues as significant to Makoshika's management: Community Relations, Visitor Services, Infrastructure, Education and Interpretation, Financial and Human Resources, and Cultural and Natural Resource Management. For each issue, the planning committee and FWP developed a set of goals for the next ten years, along with objectives and recommended actions to reach each goal. The recommendations are described in this plan along with a timeline for completion. The committee emphasized the importance of including measurable actions whenever possible so park management can check timelines and measure progress in implementing this plan.

ISSUE: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Issue Statement: Makoshika State Park is a valuable asset to the Glendive community. Local use of the park needs to be stimulated through better partnerships between the park and surrounding organizations and governments. These partnerships include physical connections between the city and park for educational and recreational opportunities. Also park neighbors need to be partnered with to address visitor and livestock trespass issues, including liability, damage, and visitor safety.

<p>Goal: Develop physical connections between Makoshika State Park, the Yellowstone River, and the City of Glendive.</p>

Objective: Coordinate with the City of Glendive, Chamber of Commerce, Dawson Community College (DCC), Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF), and the public to establish non-motorized trails connecting the park, the river, and the city. The trails will extend at least five miles into the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Coordinate with the community and FWP Design and Construction to propose new trails within the park and potential trailheads at Dawson Community College and east of Glendive.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Produce an initial trail proposal in conjunction with Friends of Makoshika, including:
 - a. Map of the proposed route,
 - b. Funding mechanisms,
 - c. Trail surfaces,
 - d. Proposal for park district creation to help with maintenance of the trail.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Investigate the possibility of an equestrian trail in the park and/or extending outside of the park.

Recommended Action

1. Develop a proposal for an equestrian trail available for evaluation by FWP and the public (also see Visitor Services Goal and trails objectives on page 17).

Timeline for completion: five years.

2. Consider the possibility of expanding commercial equestrian, buggy, and wagon rides in the park beyond the current recreation agreement with Shorty and Bear's Buggy Rides (offering horseback and hayrides as well) in the park.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Investigate the possibility of a mountain bike trail in the park.

Recommended Action

1. Explore community demand for mountain bike trail and if there is a need for single versus shared trail use.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Investigate stewardship and maintenance considerations for a mountain bike trail (also see Visitor Services Goal and trails objective on page 18).

Timeline for completion: five years.

Goal: Develop private and public partnerships to provide education, interpretation, and recreation.

Objective: Collaborate with schools to increase educational opportunities at the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish a hands-on outdoor classroom at the park to host schools in Glendive and the surrounding areas and Elderhostel programs.
 - a. Possible subjects include: paleontology lab, geology, botany and GPS/GIS.
 - b. Develop a curriculum and lesson plan.
 - c. Advertise at schools, including visits to schools.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Continue to collaborate with area high schools and Dawson Community College to establish credit-granting programs in connection with the park. Programs may include paleontology, botany, and GPS/GIS.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Establish outdoor classroom programs with local museums.
 - a. Consider collaborations with the Makoshika Dinosaur Museum like the Dino Camp occurring in summer 2004.
 - b. Collaborate with Creationism Museum.

Timeline for completion: one year.

4. Work with Dawson Community College to establish a 2-year Parks and Recreation program for Eastern Montana.

Timeline for completion: five years.

5. Utilize research excavation projects when appropriate as an opportunity to learn, watch, and, on a case-by-case basis, provide hands-on assistance.
 - a. Partner with museums and professionals like the Museum of the Rockies.
 - b. Consider using the experience as a revenue source for the park through a volunteer pay to work program.
 - c. Provide visitor tours to site.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Work with organizations involved with the park to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue partnerships with the Lion's Club, Friends of Makoshika, Kiwanis, Makoshika Bowmen, and expand to other groups, including the 4H Club and other community service organizations.
 - a. Continue existing organization sponsored events at the park.
 - b. Pursue other project partnerships, such as: brochure distribution, rotating signs in community for park events.
 - c. Develop a list of projects to coordinate with organizations.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Update plant and animal species lists for the park.
 - a. Partner with The Nature Conservancy to update a plant species list.
 - b. Partner with other relevant agencies and organizations to update or establish other pertinent lists.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Collaborate with the Montana Park and Recreation Association and the City of Glendive Park and Recreation Department to develop new special events, including the possibility of Folf events.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Encourage use of park facilities by outside organizations.

Recommended Actions

1. Through marketing and networking, encourage use of the amphitheater, group use shelter, hiking trails, and other park amenities for groups such as: Daycare businesses, Group homes, Boys and Girls Ranch, Camps.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Consider establishing regulated geocaching activities at the park.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Goal: Develop constructive relationships with park neighbors.
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Objective: Investigate and record neighbor concerns and comments.

Recommended Actions

1. Host an annual “How are we doing?” neighborhood meeting to discuss accomplishments and identify problem areas.

Timeline for completion: annually.

Objective: Establish boundary markings around the park property to avoid visitor trespassing onto private property.

Recommended Actions

1. Install line of sight posts around the property. At this point, do not consider fencing as a viable option due to terrain and maintenance costs.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Provide educational information in the park brochure. Include:
 - a. Map with private property designations.
 - b. Language asking visitors to stay in the park.
 - c. Landmarks for boundary reference.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Manage livestock.

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct current range assessment to assess the composition and condition of plant communities in the park and determine the extent and methods to control non-native plant species.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. After the range assessment is complete, decide on opportunities for responsible livestock use in the park, including grazing leases, to maintain plant health and vigor.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Consider continuing sheep grazing for leafy spurge containment.
 - a. Consider alternative controls such as a Spurge Roundup or insect controls.
 - b. Establish better management for any future sheep grazing to prevent future damage in the park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

4. Should livestock grazing be allowed, periodic range assessments will be undertaken to assure livestock use is not negatively impacting the composition or condition of plant communities, cultural or scientific resources.

Timeline for completion: annually.

Objective: Work with wildlife biologist and warden to have special weapons restricted hunts as needed to control wildlife populations.

Discussion

Hunting is currently allowed in much of Makoshika State Park and will continue in these areas. Deer occasionally find harbor in northern Cains Coulee, an area closed to rifle hunting. In an effort to reduce urban deer conflicts, vegetative damage to neighboring property and to control population numbers, hunting would be allowed with weapon restrictions for limited times in this area. Due to the number of visitor facilities in the area, rifle hunting would not be permitted in the highly visited Cains Coulee. This hunting opportunity would be allowed on an "as needed" basis as determined by the park manager, agency biologist and warden.

Recommended Actions

1. Coordinate with biologist and warden annually to determine if mule deer populations need to be reduced in the park.

Timeline for completion: annually.

2. If mule deer population reduction is needed, develop map and guidelines for hunters showing boundaries of special hunting area, weapons restrictions and length of season.

Timeline for completion: annually.

3. Publicize special hunting opportunity, monitor hunting activity and evaluate if desired results were achieved.

Timeline for completion: as needed.

Goal: Generate better local awareness of Makoshika State Park, including information on how to access the park and opportunities available at the park.

See Goal under the Visitor Services Issue next page.

ISSUE: VISITOR SERVICES

Issue Statement: In order to increase visitation, the park needs to be strategically promoted. Along with efforts to increase visitation, there needs to be a balance between park experience and resource preservation. While park facilities are generally serving visitors adequately, some improvements are needed to provide amenities necessary for visitor comfort and to increase the length of time visitors stay at the park.

Goal: Generate better awareness of Makoshika State Park, including information on how to access the park and opportunities available at the park.

Objective: Provide clear directions to the park from all feeder routes.

Recommended Actions

1. Improve directional signing from the Interstate to the park.
 - a. Directional signing to follow up on the new sign located on Hwy 200.
 - b. Provide signing at the intersections of
 - i. Hwy 200 and Towne Street,
 - ii. Hwy 16 and Towne Street,
 - iii. 215 exit pointing towards Merrill, and
 - iv. near the chamber building.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Coordinate with Highway officials to place dinosaur tracks on the roads in downtown Glendive leading to the park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Have the Glendive city grid returned to the state highway map.

Timeline for completion: three years.

4. Provide text on the current “footprint signs” to explain they lead to Makoshika; perhaps add the word “Makoshika” to the signs.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Develop a marketing plan for the park.

Discussion

A marketing plan would target a variety of audiences with specific messages intending to promote the park and community, as well as educate. The recommended actions outlined below are ideas that would be included in the marketing plan, but do not represent all potential marketing strategies.

Recommended Actions

1. Disperse park information at Hollecker Lake.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Advertise special events on local television and radio stations.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Partner with local newspaper, *Glendive Ranger Review*, to run weekly features on activities and opportunities including campfire series and events by groups affiliated with the Park.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

4. Coordinate with Glendive Economic Development Council, surrounding Chambers of Commerce and local businesses to help promote Glendive area tourism, establish familiarization tours and promote packaged tourism opportunities.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. Produce high quality signs to post throughout Glendive for seasonal events.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

6. Develop and distribute, in a formalized manner, an annual events calendar.
 - a. Include the campfire series and events by groups affiliated with the park like the Lion's Camp and Makoshika Bowmen.
 - b. Take home sheets.
 - c. Larger, more permanent sign.

Timeline for completion: annually.

Attempt to link FWP Makoshika website with Makoshika Park.

Timeline for completion: one year.

7. Place a window mural to advertise the park on the old Chamber of Commerce building in Glendive.

Timeline for completion: two years.

8. Establish an information kiosk at Gazebo Park. Information provided will include park brochures, a map, and walking trail information.

Timeline for completion: three years.

9. Establish National Buzzard Day.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Goal: Enhance and expand recreation opportunities for a diversity of park users.

Objective: Provide more trails, including some longer, non-motorized trails.

Recommended Actions

1. Communicate opportunities and hazards of off-trail exploration to visitors.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Establish and communicate overnight backcountry opportunities.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Develop hiking trail network throughout the park that interconnects with existing trails and facilities, such as campground, visitor center, group use shelter, amphitheater and Lion's Camp.

Timeline for completion: five years.

4. Develop trail parallel to main entrance road utilizing ground disrupted by future water line installation to the campground. Consider paving eight-feet width to allow multiple use and providing a buffer zone from roadway where feasible.

Timeline for completion: five years.

5. Develop an equestrian trail that includes interpretive signing.

Timeline for completion: five years.

6. Develop an educational brochure on equestrian use, such as trail courtesy, brand inspection.

Timeline for completion: five years.

7. Develop a trail for mountain bikers.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Discussion

The trail should include casual touring sections and technical sections with opportunities to bypass the technical sections. Much of this trail may overlap with park roads where road width and visibility allows safe passage.

Objective: Continue to allow off highway vehicles (OHV) and snowmobile use on roads.

Discussion

The natural resources of Makoshika State Park are sensitive and slow to recover from off road vehicular use. Even limited off road use can cause damage to natural and paleontological resources. The park strives to limit trespass onto private neighboring property with signs and patrols along designated routes; off road use tends to spread into unauthorized areas.

Recommended Actions

1. Educate visitors to damage caused by off road use.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Educate visitors to OHV license and snowmobile permits requirements.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Allow snowmobile use on unplowed roads when adequate snowfall is received; sign routes as needed.

Timeline for completion: annually.

4. Enforce policy allowing motorized vehicles on roads only.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

Goal: Actively work with the community to relocate range outside the park without interrupting current use patterns, while stabilizing existing rifle range facility and improving visitor safety measures.

Discussion

The rifle range has been in use for approximately thirty years and is a very important recreational opportunity to the Glendive community. FWP and the State Parks Division support and foster responsible shooting activities, but this site is not an ideal location to hold shooting events. Visitor and shooter safety are primary concerns. The direction of fire is in line with a trail route less than a half-mile northeast and the local landfill. A misfired round could easily reach residents in Glendive or park users at the group use area, visitor center, campground, or on nearby trails, which are all nearby in the same drainage.

As park visitation and recreational opportunities increase over the next ten years, conflicts between recreational and shooting activities are also expected to increase. A shooting range is not a typical component of a state park and many visitors fear for their safety when hearing shooting near where they are camping, hiking, or sightseeing.

Various groups have intermittently helped maintain the site; however, the State Parks Division is ultimately responsible for management, including consistent safety measures and appealing aesthetics. Facilities are dilapidating and costly to repair, but are needed to aid with shooter safety.

This site has no potential to improve due to the terrain and surrounding public use. The range has a narrow shooting lane shared by rifle and pistol users. It lacks adequate parking for groups and space to host shooting events, such as tournaments, cowboy action shoots or long-range competitions. Club house, classroom and storage facilities are not available, nor is there space to accommodate these features in the future.

Objective: Stabilize existing rifle range to provide safe user facilities.

Recommended Actions

1. Sign perimeter of rifle range to alert other recreationists in the area of shooting activity.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Maintain benches and backdrop structures at rifle range until a better range can be established.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Remove canopy over benches when no longer structurally sound.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Continue to pursue finding a suitable rifle range location outside the park.

1. Work collaboratively with community and local shooting clubs to find replacement range outside of park.

Timeline for completion: begin immediately – ongoing until suitable location secured.

2. Provide state park funds to assist in the acquisition of a new range location.

Timeline for completion: Once a new site has been selected.

3. Work with interested parties to provide latrines and benches at new range facility.

Timeline for completion: Once a new site has been selected.

Goal: Continue use of existing archery range.
--

Discussion

The archery range is located in a remote area of the park and is an activity where shooting distance is minimal, quiet; and other public recreation in the area is minimal. In addition, the archery range does not require significant time or funds to maintain function or area aesthetics. Expansion of the archery range is not planned. The current archery range is considered compatible with other recreational uses currently in this area and backcountry trails proposed in the next ten years.

Objective: Continue leasing archery range to local club for management.

Recommended Actions

1. Renew five-year lease to Makoshika Bowmen, or initiate new lease to other legitimate archery club if a lease dispute arises.

Timeline for completion: three years and eight years.

Goal: Develop new park amenities to increase visitor comfort, safety, and length of visit.

Objective: Improve facilities in the lower campground.

Recommended Actions

1. Install city water to the campground to provide potable water for campers, flush restroom facility, showers, irrigation for trees.

Timeline for completion: five years.

2. Install potable water and sink facilities at the Group Use Shelter.

Timeline for completion: five years.

3. Establish facilities for horses near enough to the campground to service the horses, but far enough away so as not to disturb other visitors.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Provide water in the park interior.

Discussion

Water is available at only three locations in the park: visitor center, campground and the Lions Youth Camp (private). Potable water available in the interior of the park would improve public service and safety. Water from wells may need to be treated prior to drinking and tested for community use, which would influence cost feasibility.

Recommended Actions

1. Install signs at visitor center and other pertinent locations in park notifying visitors that potable water is not currently available past the campground.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Investigate methods to provide water for interior areas of the park. Consider vending machines where feasible and cooperative use of electricity and/or wells at McCarty Cabin and Lions Camp.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Install new latrines.

Discussion

In order to maintain restroom facilities in these locations, roads will need to be improved and maintained (see Infrastructure Issue).

Recommended Actions

1. Provide latrines at Sand Point Overlook and Artist's Vista.

Timeline for completion: five years.

ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE

Issue Statement: Road maintenance is a continuing issue in the park given the unique geology of the area. Maintenance needs to address weather, travel and visitor safety. There is an opportunity to develop more scenic overlooks, and pullouts for safety if proposed trail routes are to share the road. Radio towers and electric lines interfere with park beauty; the park needs a direct approach to reducing impacts to the scenic views.

Goal: Manage and maintain roads to improve travel throughout the park.

Objective: Educate visitors on park road conditions.

Recommended Actions

1. Post signs warning about wet road conditions and recommending high clearance vehicles beyond the posted point.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Provide consistent and adequate ongoing road maintenance.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish annual budget for road gravel.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Install signs to communicate hazards along the roads, including turns, narrow areas, and potential bicycles on the road.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Continue to utilize reflectors to mark hazards along the roads.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

4. Sign steep drop-offs along the road.

Timeline for completion: one year.

5. Provide more gravel from the Saddle to Lion's Camp.

Timeline for completion: two years.

6. Consider installing guard rails at the Saddle, include maintenance costs in this analysis.

Timeline for completion: five years.

7. Improve the road grading and drainage from Lions Camp to Sand Creek and add gravel as feasible.

Timeline for completion: five years.

8. Extend paving from top of switchbacks to amphitheater as funding is available.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Provide scenic overlooks where feasible with interpretive panels.

Recommended Actions:

1. Identify, name, map and sign overlooks and picnic areas within park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

2. Add new overlooks when feasible during road repair and construction.

Timeline for completion: 10 years.

Goal: Clear radio towers and electric lines from park viewshed.
--

Objective: Initiate and maintain a dialogue with radio tower owners.

Recommended Actions:

1. Identify responsibility for initiating and maintaining a dialogue between radio tower owners and a Parks Division staff member.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Coordinate discussion with tower owners to determine if, because of technical reasons, towers should be combined at one expanded facility.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Coordinate with tower owners to clarify and simplify access through facility lands, i.e. means of locking gate that limits public entry, but ensures access for administrative use.

Timeline for completion: two years.

4. Work with tower owners to research other potential tower sites outside of park boundaries and assist tower owners in acquisition/lease process.

Timeline for completion: five years.

5. If towers can be combined or relocated, ensure that local law enforcement (including FWP) means of communication are not jeopardized in providing safety for park visitors and resources.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Provide incentives for radio tower removal, consolidation, and/or screening to reduce visual impacts.

Recommended Actions

1. Study lease agreements and identify areas where lease renewals may be discouraged and/or reappraised.

Timeline for completion: five years.

2. Explore screening methods and resulting tower owner benefits such as temporary lease cost reduction.

Timeline for completion: five years.

3. Reappraise lease agreement values where appropriate and establish an annual escalating price schedule.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

4. Consider paying power company to bury sections of lines that interfere with scenic views in park.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Investigate feasibility of burying electric lines through park.

Recommended Actions

1. Discuss with power company potential and funding options to bury lines.

Timeline for completion: two years.

2. Analyze environmental impacts of burying lines.

Timeline for completion: five years.

3. If impacts are not significant, determine timeline to bury electric lines.

Timeline for completion: five years.

ISSUE: INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

Issue Statement: Park information needs to be updated and more readily available to visitors. This consists of inclusion of new park features, and updates of park brochures and trail guides. Interpretive displays are stale and need to be upgraded and diversified to keep visitors coming back. This will include more complete utilization of the Visitor Center building. Also, artifacts need adequate security. Educational opportunities for schools, organizations, and individual visitors need to be proactively expanded. Adequate staff and resources for interpretation need to be provided for the park.

A comprehensive interpretive plan for the visitor center would be completed in the next two years, which would consider the goals and objectives listed below. The goals listed here represent specific ideas for potential expansion of interpretive and educational programs in the park as expressed by the advisory committee and parks staff.

Goal: Improve displays and display areas to engage visitors, including repeat visitors and better communicate why Makoshika is a state park.

Objective: More completely utilize space in the Visitor Center.

Recommended Actions

1. Rearrange the displays and office space to reflect the park, and place signs throughout the park linked to Visitor Center themes.
 - a. Open layout would provide opportunities to demonstrate the dynamic nature of Makoshika resources and the flow between various layers and time periods.
 - b. Geologic layers in park could be reflected in the building: geologic levels, prairie, badlands levels.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Upgrade displays to move beyond the current visual format and engage all senses.

Recommended Actions

1. Utilize multimedia and current technologies to interpret displays.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Design and install interactive displays.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Consider designating one section of the Visitor Center for rotational or traveling displays.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Provide more structured guidance through the Visitor Center displays.

Recommended Actions

1. Place directional signing to guide visitors through displays; consider dinosaur tracks on the floor.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Provide interpretive guides for school groups and individual visitors.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Provide a means for visitors to take interpretive messages home.

Recommended Actions

1. Provide merchandise in the gift store that is relevant to interpretive themes.

Timeline for completion: two years.

Goal: Develop and promote focused educational and interpretive opportunities.
--

Objective: Institute hands-on interpretation programs year round.

Recommended Actions

1. Increase programming focused on local interests.
 - a. Develop programs for more than one night a week in the summers.
 - b. Expand campfire programming to year-round programs, perhaps on weekends in the winter months.
 - c. Expand programming subjects beyond paleontology and geology to possibly include prairie history, homesteading, astrology, and local stories as possible topics.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Utilize the Visitor Center basement for programs in the winter and as an alternate, bad weather location for interpretive programs in the summer months.
 - a. Need to upgrade the basement to accommodate programming.
 - i. Restroom.
 - ii. Classroom setting.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Further develop *existing* interpretive trails.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop thematic interpretive trails focused on certain interpretive topics such as history, botany, or geology.
 - a. Cap Rock Trail provides smaller, more intimate features of the park.
 - b. Diane Gabriel Trail provides larger formations, including table tops, slumping, and other erosional features.

Timeline for completion: two years.

2. Provide signage throughout Cap Rock and Kinney Coulee trails.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Update trail brochures.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Develop *additional* interpretive sites and trails.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop new trails. Suggested locations include:
 - a. Eyeful Vista area, which offers petrified trees and park vegetation.
 - b. Historical area trail from the base of the switchbacks to the amphitheater to the McCarty Cabin (if owner permission is received to stabilize or fence deteriorating cabin).
 - c. Backcountry loop trails in southeastern areas of park.

Timeline for completion: five years.

2. Interpret, through a display, the K-T Boundary from the Diane Gabriel Trail and Sand Creek Overlook.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

3. Provide wayside exhibits and overlooks that are connected with an audiotape auto tour along park roads, including Valley Loop Drive. Potential points of interest include:

- a. Artist's Vista
- b. Sand Creek Overlook
- c. Scoria Point
- d. Buzzard's Ridge
- e. Below the amphitheater
- f. Cain's Coulee

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

Objective: Protect, record, and interpret archeological resources.

Recommended Actions

1. Educate visitors on the importance of leaving archeological and paleontological artifacts where they are found.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Interpret the fossil-rich portion of the park near Artist's Vista.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Goal: Provide descriptive, clear information about park flora and fauna.

Objective: Provide visitors and staff with accurate, comprehensive information on park wildlife and plant life.

Recommended Actions

1. Educate staff on the park ecosystem.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Identify and document rare and threatened species in the park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Conduct an inventory of species in the park that includes plants and wildlife, including amphibians, reptiles, and fungi.

Timeline for completion: five years.

4. Provide information on plant blossoms and most opportune times to view flowers.

Timeline for completion: five years.

5. Develop a colored brochure with pictures of common plants in the park.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

6. Provide a brochure of what species visitors can find in the park with discussion about seasonal fluctuations.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

ISSUE: FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Issue Statement: Additional personnel and financial resources may be needed to increase services as outlined in this management plan, including guided tours, educational programming, and enforcement. Resources are also needed to provide security in the park, especially in the Visitor Center and for maintenance of existing facilities. Educational methods, including a uniformed presence in the park, need to be utilized to more effectively implement park rules.

Goal: Expand service at the park with staff or other resources.
--

Objective: Provide tour guide services outside of visitor center to include guided outings on park trails.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish a volunteer program with local interest groups to lead tours on specific topics, such as birding, plant identification, fossil identification, astrology, and historic use of the area.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Provide training for volunteers and staff who lead tours

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Consider the possibility of expanding commercial equestrian, buggy, and wagon rides in the park beyond the current recreation agreement with Shorty and Bear's Buggy Rides (offering horseback and hayrides as well) in the park.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Also see Objectives listed below and the associated Recommended Actions on referenced pages.

Objective: Work with organizations involved with the park to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park (refer to Community Relations Issue and Goal to develop partnerships, page 12).

Objective: Institute hands-on interpretive programs year round (refer to Interpretation and Education Issue and Goal to develop focused educational and interpretive opportunities, page 27).

Goal: Secure and train personnel and an operating budget for development and implementation of interpretation and educational programming.

Objective: Determine and locate personnel needed to conduct programs as outlined and resources to support them.

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct an analysis of personnel and resources currently available for park programs, including possibilities for regional and private support for program development.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Develop partnerships with private and public organizations for program leaders and operations costs.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Establish a docent program to lead tours in and out of the visitor center.

Timeline for completion: annually.

4. Provide training for park volunteers relative to their interest and duties in the park.

Timeline for completion: annually.

5. Develop internship opportunities for research, interpretation and recreation programs in the park.

Timeline for completion: three years.

6. Partner with universities to provide credit for internships, including MSU paleontology program and Dawson Community College recreation program, if instituted.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Goal: Provide a higher level of enforcement and security that protects our facility investments.

Objective: Increase security at the Visitor Center.

Recommended Actions

1. Install a security system at the Visitor Center that includes video and rings in to the park manager's residence and Glendive Police/Dawson County Sheriff dispatch.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

2. Evaluate the Visitor Center to ensure safety procedures and mechanisms are in place for staff. Include consideration of a safe room for staff.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

3. Consider use of cables and motion sensors around valuable artifacts.

Timeline for Completion: three to five years.

4. Install a fire suppression system.

Timeline for Completion: three years.

5. Expand the radio system in the park to include a base station at the Visitor Center.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Balance education about park rules with enforcement.

Recommended Actions

1. Ensure staff are available in or near the camping areas.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Increase the uniformed presence in the park to a level at which visitors have reasonable opportunities for contact with staff.

Timeline for completion: two to five years.

Goal: Manage effects of fee structure change.
--

Discussion

The 2004 change in fee structure in Montana State Parks from a daily entrance fee to a yearly, \$4 fee on vehicle registration, generated a lot of interest. The public still has many questions about the change, including how effective the change has been in generating revenue for the Parks system and how the money is being used.

Objective: Communicate the success of the new fee system and the importance of continuing to support the system.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue to provide information to County treasurers on the importance and value of this system through regular visits to treasurer offices in the Makoshika vicinity.

Timeline for completion: Ongoing.

2. Provide updates to the local media on the effectiveness of the system, identifying improvements, and upcoming projects at Makoshika as a result of the change in fees.

Timeline for completion: Ongoing.

Objective: Analyze and respond to changes in park visitation that result from the fee structure change.

Recommended Actions

1. Evaluate the amount of staff time freed from checking fee compliance and, if significant, use as a resource for other operations.

Timeline for completion: One year.

2. Analyze demographic changes that occur and provide programming and infrastructure to meet these changing needs.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

ISSUE: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Issue Statement: Through implementation of this plan, the park's natural and cultural resources need to be protected, as well as managed for the benefit of park visitors, neighbors, and other stakeholders. This management includes stewardship of the land, including, but not limited to, acquisition of inholdings, future development throughout the park, including Recreation and Public Purposes Act parcels acquired from the Bureau of Land Management, and attention to fire danger effects on park resources and neighbors. Recreational activities that affect the resources need to be addressed, such as fossil and artifact hunting. Botanical, paleontological, and geological studies should be pursued to increase knowledge about the park and identify potential management considerations.

Goal: Maintain a clean, natural habitat in the park to the greatest possible extent.

Objective: Control park damage and litter resulting from the neighboring county landfill.

Discussion

Due to strong winds, garbage from a county landfill located due north of the park is negatively affecting areas in the northern, undeveloped section of the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Work with the County and City of Glendive to shut down the dump during high winds.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing.

2. Work with the County, City of Glendive and volunteers to hand pick garbage that is deposited in the park.

Timeline for Completion: annually

3. Monitor and record the amount of garbage deposited in the park from the dump.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

4. Work with the County and City of Glendive to install a chain link fence around the landfill site.

Timeline for Completion: five years.

Objective: Manage non-native plant species to maintain health of native species.

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct assessment of non-native plant species in park, including weeds.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

2. Develop multi-faceted plan to manage non-native plant species throughout park; tier off Region 7 Weed Management Plan and coordinate with County Weed Board.

Timeline for Completion: two years.

Goal: Protect and preserve the park's cultural and natural resources.
--

Objective: Reduce and prepare for fire danger.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop and implement a fire management plan and procedures that includes the County, State, BLM and neighbors.

Timeline for completion: two years.

Objective: Guard against fossil and artifact theft.

Discussion

Fossil and artifact theft are an ongoing problem throughout the park. Artifacts and fossils found in the park include: arrowheads, bone pipe, and dinosaur fossils. Due to the size and topography of the park, it is not feasible to patrol the area at all times, nor is it possible to fence the entire park perimeter.

Recommended Actions

1. Include the rules for and importance of leaving fossils, artifacts, and bones in their place into park publications and visitor orientations.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing

2. Clearly mark park boundaries with line of sight posts and on maps.

Timeline for Completion: 5 to 10 years.

Objective: Protect artifacts and fossils when they are unearthed; ensure agency ownership.

Recommended Actions

1. Locate and cover, or re-secure artifacts or fossils unless they are determined to be a significant find by a professional scientist.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing.

2. If artifacts are at high risk of theft or immediate decomposition if left in the field, park manager will document location on map and GPS if available, and photograph artifact in its original location and condition, then remove to Visitor Center for preservation and further consultation.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing.

3. Utilize the paleontology lab in the Visitor Center to prepare and examine appropriate finds.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

4. Work with permittees to provide programs to park visitors about excavations when appropriate.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. Institute a policy that FWP and the State Parks Division must approve all antiquities permits and FWP owns of all paleontological, archeological and historical finds in the park.

Timeline for completion: one year.

6. Add conditions in "Permits to Dig" that the permittee provide for the park, at no cost to FWP, a comprehensive photographic record of all finds prior to removal from the park. The permittee would provide casts of paleontological articles. Historical and archeological artifacts would be returned within a year of field work along with a full report on the research conducted.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Discussion

Only reputable people or institutions will be granted an antiquities permit administered by the State Historic Preservation Office under MCA 22-3-432 and all permits must also be approved by the State Parks Division and FWP. In an effort to better track and record fossils and artifacts discovered and removed from the park,

future finds would be owned by FWP, rather than simply the State of Montana. The park facilities are not designed to store or thoroughly investigate large projects; therefore, loans could be negotiated to arrange storage or long-term research by a qualified person or institution, as determined by the Parks Division and/or FWP historical resource coordinator.

7. Work with the Museum of the Rockies to continue an inventory of exposed bones using paleontology/geology camps.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Educate visitors about Makoshika resources.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop a park brochure about the park's paleontological resources and history.

Timeline for completion: Three to five years.

3. Inventory flora and fauna and develop a brochure (also see Interpretation and Education Issue and goal, page 31.

Objective: Improve visitor safety at McCarty Cabin.

Discussion: The McCarty Cabin is a rich representative of the pioneer spirit in eastern Montana. The cabin is currently uninhabited and continues to deteriorate. Park staff and Friends of Makoshika members have attempted to contact the cabin's owners but have not been successful. The public currently accesses the cabin through a perpetual recreation easement. The park has no maintenance authority for the building, and therefore, is facing increasing liability issues as dangers to public increase with increasingly poor conditions at the cabin.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue attempts to contact the cabin owners and request authority to fence around McCarty Cabin.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Post warnings and interpretation material outside of the McCarty Cabin.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Request possible acquisition of land and cabin and any associated natural resource rights from McCarty Cabin owners.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

4. Until the cabin is adequately fenced or stabilized, do not provide signs to the McCarty Cabin or advertise the site through written materials, including maps, brochures or new trails.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. Evaluate if cabin is feasible to restore for recreational use.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

Objective: Research historical use of park lands.

Recommended Actions

1. Research and record history of the park, including use of the park for cattle, horses, logging, and the Frontier Army. Obtain oral histories from area residents when possible.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Investigate a report of the remains of a dugout in the park. If significant, consider interpreting and possibly reconstructing the site.

Timeline for completion: five to ten years.

Goal: Resolve land use and ownership issues.

Objective: Incorporate Pine on Rocks area into the park through ownership rather than the current recreation easement.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue discussions with Charles Ferguson, adjacent landowner, about possibilities for sale of the property to the State.

Timeline for completion: ongoing

2. Survey and post the park boundaries to prevent trespassing onto private land.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Objective: Discuss with owners potential for purchasing Lions Camp inholding.

Recommended Actions

1. If seller is willing, purchase Lions Camp to reduce inholdings within the park.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

2. If purchased, collaborate with Lions Camp operators to continue their use of land through lease or other arrangement.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Acquire mineral rights to private and BLM mineral inholdings.

Recommended Actions

1. Actively pursue buying out mineral rights.

Timeline for completion: Ten years.

MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

This plan will be implemented in accordance with the State Park Division budget priorities, as recommended by the State Park Futures Committee II. Though timing and operations requirements may alter the completion order of individual actions, the following five areas identify the philosophical priorities in which the park will be managed.

1. Maintain existing park resources and facilities.
2. Protect public health and safety, which may include enforcement.
3. Enhance the experience of visitors.
4. Acquire land and resources (with the acquisition of in-holdings taking priority over purchase of completely new properties).
5. Support new construction.

IMPLEMENTATION

This plan will be implemented in accordance with the following action timeline. While there is no guarantee each action will be completed by its timeline for completion, this schedule provides a guideline for park managers when implementing this plan. Therefore, barring mitigating circumstances, the desired plan for implementation will be completed within the following time periods after plan approval.

IMMEDIATELY	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Establish a hands-on outdoor classroom at the park to host schools in Glendive and the surrounding areas and Elderhostel programs.
	Through marketing and networking, encourage use of the amphitheater, group use shelter, hiking trails, and other park amenities for groups such as: Daycare businesses, Group homes, Boys and Girls Ranch, Camps.
Visitor Services	Disperse park information at Hollecker Lake.
	Communicate opportunities and hazards of off-trail exploration to visitors.
	Sign perimeter of rifle range to alert other recreationists in the area of shooting activity.
	Maintain benches and backdrop structures at rifle range until a better range can be established.
Infrastructure	Establish annual budget for road gravel.
	Install signs to communicate hazards along the roads, including turns, narrow areas, and potential bicycles on the road.
	Identify responsibility for initiating and maintaining a dialogue between radio tower owners and a Parks Division staff member.
Financial and Human Resources	Conduct an analysis of personnel and resources currently available for park programs, including possibilities for regional and private support for program development.
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Post warnings and interpretation material outside of the McCarty Cabin.

ONGOING / ANNUALLY	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Continue to collaborate with area high schools and Dawson Community College to establish credit-granting programs in connection with the park. Programs may include paleontology, botany, and GPS/GIS.
	Continue partnerships with the Lion's Club, Friends of Makoshika, Kiwanis, Makoshika Bowmen, and expand to other groups, including the 4H Club and other community service organizations.
	Host an annual "How are we doing?" neighborhood meeting to discuss accomplishments and identify problem areas.
	Coordinate with biologist and warden annually to determine if mule deer populations need to be reduced in the park.
	If mule deer population reduction is needed, develop map and guidelines for hunters showing boundaries of special hunting area, weapons restrictions and length of season.
	Publicize special hunting opportunity, monitor hunting activity and evaluate if desired results were achieved.
	Should livestock grazing be allowed, periodic range assessments will be undertaken to assure livestock use is not negatively impacting the composition or condition of plant communities, cultural or scientific resources.
Visitor Services	Advertise special events on local television and radio stations.
	Partner with local newspaper, <i>Glendive Ranger Review</i> , to run weekly features on activities and opportunities including campfire series and events by groups affiliated with the Park.
	Coordinate with Glendive Economic Development Council, surrounding Chambers of Commerce and local businesses to help promote Glendive area tourism, establish familiarization tours and promote packaged tourism opportunities.
	Produce high quality signs to post throughout Glendive for seasonal events.
	Develop and distribute, in a formalized manner, an annual events calendar.
	Educate visitors to damage caused by off road use.
	Educate visitors to OHV license and snowmobile permits requirements.
	Allow snowmobile use on unplowed roads when adequate snowfall is received; sign routes as needed.
	Enforce policy allowing motorized vehicles on roads only.

ONGOING / ANNUALLY continued	
Visitor Services	Work collaboratively with community and local shooting clubs to find replacement range outside of park.
	Provide state park funds to assist in the acquisition of a new range location.
	Work with interested parties to provide latrines and benches at new range facility.
Infrastructure	Continue to utilize reflectors to mark hazards along the roads.
Interpretation and Education	Increase programming focused on local interests.
	Educate visitors on the importance of leaving archeological and paleontological artifacts where they are found.
	Educate staff on the park ecosystem.
Financial and Human Resources	Provide training for volunteers and staff who lead tours
	Develop partnerships with private and public organizations for program leaders and operations costs.
	Establish a docent program to lead tours in and out of the visitor center.
	Provide training for park volunteers relative to their interest and duties in the park.
	Ensure staff are available in or near the camping areas.
	Continue to provide information to County treasurers on the importance and value of this system through regular visits to treasurer offices in the Makoshika vicinity.
	Provide updates to the local media on the effectiveness of the system, identifying improvements, and upcoming projects at Makoshika as a result of the change in fees.
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Work with the County and City of Glendive to shut down the dump during high winds.
	Work with the County, City of Glendive and volunteers to hand pick garbage that is deposited in the park.
	Include the rules for and importance of leaving fossils, artifacts, and bones in their place into park publications and visitor orientations.
	Locate and cover, or re-secure artifacts or fossils unless they are determined to be a significant find by a professional scientist.
	Utilize the paleontology lab in the Visitor Center to prepare and examine appropriate finds.
	Work with permittees to provide programs to park visitors about excavations when appropriate.
	Continue attempts to contact the cabin owners and request authority to fence around McCarty Cabin.

ONGOING / ANNUALLY continued	
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Until the cabin is adequately fenced or stabilized, do not provide signs to the McCarty Cabin or advertise the site through written materials, including maps, brochures or new trails.
	Continue discussions with Charles Ferguson, adjacent landowner, about possibilities for sale of the property to the State.

WITHIN ONE YEAR	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Coordinate with the community and FWP Design and Construction to propose new trails within the park and potential trailheads at Dawson Community College and east of Glendive.
	Establish outdoor classroom programs with local museums.
	Conduct current range assessment to assess the composition and condition of plant communities in the park the extent and methods to control non-native plant species.
Visitor Services	Improve directional signing from the Interstate to the park.
	Attempt to link FWP Makoshika website with Makoshika Park website.
	Remove canopy over shooting benches when no longer structurally sound.
	Install signs at visitor center and other pertinent locations in park notifying visitors that potable water is not currently available past the campground.
Infrastructure	Post signs warning about wet road conditions and recommending high clearance vehicles beyond the posted point.
	Sign steep drop-offs along the road.
	Provide more gravel from the Saddle to Lion's Camp.
Interpretation and Education	Place directional signing to guide visitors through displays; consider dinosaur tracks on the floor.
	Provide interpretive guides for school groups and individual visitors.
Financial and Human Resources	Establish a volunteer program with local interest groups to lead tours on specific topics, such as birding, plant identification, fossil identification, astrology, and historic use of the area.
	Install a security system at the Visitor Center that includes video and rings in to the park manager's residence and Glendive Police/Dawson County Sheriff dispatch.

WITHIN ONE YEAR continued	
Financial and Human Resources	Evaluate the Visitor Center to ensure safety procedures and mechanisms are in place for staff. Include consideration of a safe room for staff.
	Evaluate the amount of staff time freed from checking fee compliance and, if significant, use as a resource for other operations.
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Monitor and record the amount of garbage deposited in the park from the dump.
	Conduct assessment of non-native plant species in park, including weeds.
	Institute a policy that establishes FWP ownership of all paleontological and historical finds in the park and a condition in Permits to Dig that the permittee provide for the park, at cost to them, a caste of the article they remove from the park.

WITHIN TWO YEARS	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	After the range assessment is complete, decide on opportunities for responsible livestock use in the park, including grazing leases, to maintain plant health and vigor.
	Consider continuing sheep grazing for leafy spurge containment.
Visitor Services	Coordinate with Highway officials to place dinosaur tracks on the roads in downtown Glendive leading to the park.
	Place a window mural to advertise the park on the old Chamber of Commerce building in Glendive.
Infrastructure	Identify, name, map and sign overlooks and picnic areas within park.
	Coordinate discussion with tower owners to determine if, because of technical reasons, towers should be combined at one expanded facility.
	Coordinate with tower owners to clarify and simplify access through facility lands, i.e. means of locking gate that limits public entry, but ensures access for administrative use.
	Discuss with power company potential and funding options to bury lines.
Interpretation and Education	Develop interpretive plan for the Visitor Center.
	Provide merchandise in the gift store that is relevant to interpretive themes.
	Develop thematic interpretive trails focused on certain interpretive topics such as history, botany, or geology.

Interpretation and Education	Identify and document rare and threatened species in the park.
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Develop multi-faceted plan to manage non-native plant species throughout park; tier off Region 7 Weed Management Plan and coordinate with County Weed Board.
	Develop and implement a fire management plan and procedures that includes the County, State, BLM and neighbors.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Produce an initial trail proposal in conjunction with Friends of Makoshika.
	Develop a proposal for an equestrian trail available for evaluation by FWP and the public
	Consider the possibility of expanding commercial equestrian, buggy, and wagon rides in the park beyond the current recreation agreement with Shorty and Bear's Buggy Rides (offering horseback and hayrides as well) in the park.
	Explore community demand for mountain bike trail and if there is a need for single versus shared trail use.
	Investigate stewardship and maintenance considerations for a mountain bike trail.
	Work with Dawson Community College to establish a 2-year Parks and Recreation program for Eastern Montana.
	Utilize research excavation projects when appropriate as an opportunity to learn, watch, and, on a case-by-case basis, provide hands-on assistance.
	Update plant and animal species lists for the park.
	Collaborate with the Montana Park and Recreation Association and the City of Glendive Park and Recreation Department to develop new special events, including the possibility of Folf events.
	Consider establishing regulated geocaching activities at the park.
	Install line of sight posts around the property. At this point, do not consider fencing as a viable option due to terrain and maintenance costs.
	Provide educational information in the park brochure.
Visitor Services	Have the Glendive city grid returned to the state highway map.
	Provide text on the current "footprint signs" to explain they lead to Makoshika; perhaps add the word "Makoshika" to the signs.
	Establish an information kiosk at Gazebo Park. Information will include park brochures, a map, and walking trail information.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS continued	
Visitor Services	Establish and communicate overnight backcountry opportunities.
	Develop hiking trail network throughout the park that interconnects with existing trails and facilities, such as campground, visitor center, group use shelter, amphitheater and Lion's Camp.
	Develop trail parallel to main entrance road utilizing ground disrupted by future water line installation to the campground. Consider paving eight-foot width to allow multiple use and providing a buffer zone from roadway where feasible.
	Develop an equestrian trail that includes interpretive signing.
	Develop an educational brochure on equestrian use, such as trail courtesy, brand inspection.
	Develop a trail for mountain bikers.
	Install city water to the campground to provide potable water for campers, flush restroom facility, showers, irrigation for trees.
	Install potable water and sink facilities at the Group Use Shelter.
	Provide latrines at Sand Point Overlook and Artist's Vista.
Infrastructure	Consider installing guard rails at the Saddle, include maintenance costs in this analysis.
	Improve the road grading and drainage from Lions Camp to Sand Creek and add gravel as feasible.
	Work with tower owners to research other potential tower sites outside of park boundaries and assist tower owners in acquisition/lease process.
	If towers can be combined or relocated, ensure that local law enforcement (including FWP) means of communication are not jeopardized in providing safety for park visitors and resources.
	Study lease agreements and identify areas where lease renewals may be discouraged and/or reappraised.
	Explore screening methods and resulting tower owner benefits such as temporary lease cost reduction.
	Analyze environmental impacts of burying lines.
	If impacts are not significant, determine timeline to bury electric lines.
Interpretation and Education	Rearrange the displays and office space to reflect the park, and place signs throughout the park linked to Visitor Center themes.
	Utilize multimedia and current technologies to interpret displays.
	Design and install interactive displays.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS continued	
Interpretation and Education	Consider designating one section of the Visitor Center for rotational or traveling displays.
	Utilize the Visitor Center basement for programs in the winter and as an alternate, bad weather location for interpretive programs in the summer months.
	Provide signage throughout Cap Rock and Kinney Coulee trails.
	Update trail brochures.
	Develop new trails as suggested in text.
	Interpret the fossil-rich portion of the park near Artist's Vista.
	Conduct an inventory of species in the park that includes plants and wildlife, including amphibians, reptiles, and fungi.
	Provide information on plant blossoms and most opportune times to view flowers.
Financial and Human Resources	Consider the possibility of expanding commercial equestrian, buggy, and wagon rides in the park beyond the current recreation agreement with Shorty and Bear's Buggy Rides (offering horseback and hayrides as well) in the park
	Develop internship opportunities for research, interpretation and recreation programs in the park.
	Partner with universities to provide credit for internships, including MSU paleontology program and Dawson Community College recreation program, if instituted.
	Consider use of cables and motion sensors around valuable artifacts.
	Install a fire suppression system in visitor center.
	Expand the radio system in the park to include a base station at the visitor center.
	Increase the uniformed presence in the park to a level at which visitors have reasonable opportunities for contact with staff.
	Analyze demographic changes that occur and provide programming and infrastructure to meet these changing needs.
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Work with the County and City of Glendive to install a chain link fence around the landfill site.
	Work with the Museum of the Rockies to continue an inventory of exposed bones using paleontology/geology camps.
	Develop a park brochure about the park's paleontological resources and history.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS continued	
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Research and record history of the park, including use of the park for cattle, horses, logging, and the Frontier Army. Obtain oral histories from area residents when possible.
	Survey and post the park boundaries to prevent trespassing onto private land.

WITHIN TEN YEARS	
Issue	Action
Visitor Services	Establish National Buzzard Day.
	Renew five-year lease to Makoshika Bowmen, or initiate new lease to other legitimate archery club if a lease dispute arises.
	Establish facilities for horses near enough to the campground to service the horses, but far enough away so as not to disturb other visitors.
	Investigate methods to provide water for interior areas of the park. Consider vending machines where feasible and cooperative use of electricity and/or wells at McCarty Cabin and Lions Camp.
Infrastructure	Extend paving from top of switchbacks to amphitheater as funding is available.
	Add new overlooks when feasible during road repair and construction.
	Reappraise lease agreement values where appropriate and establish an annual escalating price schedule.
	Consider paying power company to bury sections of lines that interfere with scenic views in park.
Interpretation and Education	Interpret, through a display, the K-T Boundary from the Diane Gabriel Trail and Sand Creek Overlook.
	Provide wayside exhibits and overlooks that are connected with an audiotape auto tour along park roads, including Valley Loop Drive.
	Develop a colored brochure with pictures of common plants in the park.
	Provide a brochure of what species visitors can find in the park with discussion about seasonal fluctuations.
Natural and Cultural Resource Management	Clearly mark park boundaries with line of sight posts and on maps.
	Request possible acquisition of land and cabin and any associated natural resource rights from McCarty Cabin owners.

WITHIN TEN YEARS continued	
	Evaluate if cabin is feasible to restore for recreational use.
	Investigate a report of the remains of a dugout in the park. If significant, consider interpreting and possibly reconstructing the site.
	If seller is willing, purchase Lions Camp.
	If purchased, collaborate with Lions Camp operators to continue their use of land through lease or other arrangement.
	Actively pursue buying out mineral rights.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Makoshika State Park Advisory Committee that worked to develop the management plan feels the park will benefit from ongoing public input and support from a formalized advisory committee. The committee recommends such a group be formed to meet as appropriate to provide guidance and support on park affairs. It is recommended that the committee meet once every two years to consider park proposals and questions that require public scrutiny. The committee would not be a decision-making body and decisions would not require permission from the committee. In addition, the committee would meet to review and update the management plan as scheduled five years after plan approval.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Public Members

Jim Lee – Friends of Makoshika
Christie Bury – Glendive Chamber of Commerce, replaced Linda Koncilya deceased
Jim Thompson – Makoshika Bowmen
Dennis Snow – Recreational park user, biking
Amy Myran – Friends of Makoshika, Recreational park user, hiking
Tom Temple – Glendive geology teacher
Charles Ferguson – Park neighbor
Max Martel – Glendive resident / member of Assiniboine-Sioux
Lance Phinney – Lion's Youth Camp

FWP Members

John Little, Region 7 Parks Manager
Ryan Sokoloski, replaced Dale Carlson, Makoshika State Park Manager
Sue Dalbey, replaced Kirsten Shelton, State Parks Planner

ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has begun the process of developing a long-range, comprehensive management plan for Makoshika State Park. This plan will be written in order to create a framework in which specific management activities will be proposed and implemented over the next ten years. A citizen-based committee will be formed to assist in an advisory capacity in the drafting of this plan. Non-FWP committee members will be selected to represent a diversity of park users and interests. The committee will include FWP members and the process will be facilitated by a member of the Helena Parks Division management team. Additional FWP employees may be consulted for specific information pertaining to park resources.

The mission of the management plan committee will be to identify park issues and trends, and to formulate management recommendations for addressing them. The committee will be asked to identify and develop recommendations from a balanced perspective, considering funding, staff, resource needs, and community desires.

Committee recommendations will be used by FWP management to develop the management plan that will guide future projects and activities at Makoshika. These recommendations will not be binding, as FWP is ultimately responsible for the management of the park, but they will be crucial in helping FWP to meet the needs and desires of Makoshika's constituency.

Committee members will be asked to commit to quarterly meetings from November of 2003 through May of 2004. Meetings will be scheduled to accommodate member schedules as much as possible. Utilizing the input from these meetings, FWP will draft a management plan during this period, with a first draft being completed in June 2004 for the committee's review. A second draft will be available for public comment in July 2004. A final management plan will be delivered to the FWP director for approval by August 2004.

APPENDIX B: 2003 VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

The 2003 Makoshika State Park Visitor Survey was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of visitor activities, preferences, and satisfaction with park amenities and services. The survey results were taken into consideration by the advisory committee during the management planning process.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted from May 24 to September 6, weekends and weekdays, to reflect projected visitation trends. Contact information was collected from one individual (the driver in the case of vehicle entrants) in each participating party that exited the park during the sampling periods. Contact information consisted of name, address, number of residents and non-residents, and type of vehicle. A mail survey was then sent to all visitors who agreed to provide contact information. The mail survey included a reminder postcard and a second survey mailing to non-respondents.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Exit Survey

Exit survey results found that person per vehicle ratios for the park average 2.3 persons per vehicle and that 92% of survey participants visited the park in a car or truck. While residency information from the survey may be skewed toward non-resident visitors because of the season and sampling hours of the survey, exit survey results show that non-resident visitors come from a variety of locations in the United States and Canada. The most frequent locations were Minnesota (6% of survey participants), North Dakota (4%), and Washington (3%).

Mail Survey

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the 281 participants who provided contact information during the exit survey returned the mail survey. More survey respondents were from Montana (67%) than out of state (33%). Approximately half of all survey respondents visited the park with their family, half visited the park once in the past year, and over 80% visited the park for a day trip, averaging 2.8 hours per visit.

Most respondents found out about the park through family and friends and information in Glendive. Twelve percent (12%) found out about the park through normal advertising venues.

While visiting the park, approximately half of respondents visited the Visitor Center. Other frequently visited sites were Eyeful Vista (31%), Pine on Rocks (31%), Cain's Coulee Overlook (29%), and the Trails (25%). Among respondents who visited the Visitor Center, respondents visited the interpretive displays (77%), the restrooms (71%), received park information (67%), and shopped in the gift store (58%). In the rest of the park, respondents enjoyed the views (58%), including scenic driving (46%), hiked (36%) and walked for pleasure (34%), and participated in a large variety of other activities.

A majority of respondents, 94%, were satisfied with their visit to the park and 73% stated they plan to return for another visit. Respondents were satisfied with all park amenities included in the survey. They were most satisfied with park cleanliness, the visitor center, the level of safety at the park, and staff service.

They were least satisfied with tours, roads, the rifle range, and the gift shop. Only 13% of respondents listed other services they desire at the park. These included more hiking and mountain biking trails, expanded interpretation and programming, and improvements to camping facilities and the roads.

Comments in the “other comments” section of the survey provided information on park experiences, including over 50 comments (23% of respondents) about a positive experience and 10 positive comments about the staff. Other comments included requests for more park information within Makoshika and in advertising venues outside of the park, requests for more trails, opposition to the radio towers, and requests to fix the roads and facilities.